

NUMBER OF CUSTOM-HOUSES IN THE UNITED STATES, &c.

JUNE 14, 1860.—Laid upon the table and ordered to be printed.

THIRTY-SIXTH CONGRESS.—FIRST SESSION.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, *March 26, 1860.*

On motion of Mr. Simms,

Resolved, That the Committee on Commerce be instructed to ascertain the number of custom-houses in the United States now established by law, the annual expenses of which exceed the amount of their receipts, and that they be instructed to inquire into the expediency of abolishing the same, and that they report by bill or otherwise.

Attest :

J. W. FORNEY, *Clerk.*

Mr. E. B. WASHBURNE, from the Committee on Commerce, made the following

R E P O R T .

Mr. Washburne, from the Committee on Commerce, under the instructions contained in the resolution of the House directing this Committee "to ascertain the number of custom-houses in the United States now established by law, the annual expenses of which exceed the amount of their receipts, and that they be instructed to inquire into the expediency of abolishing the same, and that they report by bill or otherwise," submits :

That the subject-matter of your resolution has heretofore occupied the careful attention of your committee, with a view not only to greater economy in the expenditures, on account of that branch of the public service, but also to the greater protection to the revenue by the re-organization, limiting or abolishing of such custom-houses and collection districts as experience may have shown to be demanded by the public interests.

In submitting to the House the specific information called for by the resolution your committee feel authorized to ask attention to the bill, prepared by them, already reported to the House as designed to accomplish all the purposes embraced in the said instructions.

The list of custom-houses, with the communication of the Secretary of the Treasury transmitting the same, are submitted herewith.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
April 7, 1860.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, submitting, for such information and views as the department may think proper, a resolution instructing the Committee on Commerce to ascertain the number of custom-houses in the United States, now established by law, the annual expenses of which exceed the amount of their receipts, and to inquire into the expediency of abolishing the same.

I transmit herewith a statement, prepared by the Register of the Treasury, showing the custom-houses, now established by law, the expenses of which exceeded the amount of their receipts, as appears by the transactions of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1859.

In explanation of the necessity of retaining, in certain cases, ports, at which the expenses exceed the receipts, for the security of the public revenue by preventing the illicit introduction of dutiable merchandise into the United States, I beg to refer you to my report on the finances for the year ending June 30, 1858, wherein, commenting on this subject, I said:

“In this connexion it is deemed proper to refer to a misapprehension which seems to exist, to some extent, in regard to the receipts and expenditures at certain ports.

“While the amount of foreign merchandise imported at a given point would clearly indicate the necessity for an adequate provision there for the collection of the revenue, it by no means follows that the interests of the revenue do not require the services of officers at points where few or no duties are collected. A judicious disposition of a preventive force is indispensable to the collection of a revenue from imports. Especially is this true in regard to the United States, along whose extensive seaboard and frontier boundaries there are so many points through which foreign merchandise might be thrown into the interior free of duty but for the vigilance of a preventive corps. Upon the principal avenues of trade with foreign countries provision has been made by law, at ports of entry, for the collection of duties, and at those ports our revenue from customs is mainly collected or secured. Other channels, through which foreign merchandise might clandestinely reach the interior, are, of necessity, guarded by a preventive force; and often at points where the expenses exceed the amount of collections such a force could not be withdrawn without leaving the laws and regulations exposed to evasion and the public revenue to incalculable loss.

“Take the districts of Champlain and Vermont, on the Canadian frontier, as an illustration. There is a large number of officers stationed at various points along the frontier in these districts, and the

expenses of collection exceed, by more than one-half, the amount of revenue received.

“What would be the effect on the revenue of a withdrawal of this force from these points may be perceived by a glance at the connexions of those districts, and of the waters of Lake Champlain, with the principal markets and territory of Canada East.

“One of these stations—Rouse’s Point—where a large portion of Canadian commerce first enters the United States, communicates, by railroads and the river St. John’s, with Montreal and the St. Lawrence. If no preventive force were stationed at those points, merchandise of provincial and European origin might be introduced into the United States by those routes, and at various points along the Canadian and Vermont frontier, without the possibility of prevention, and to the serious injury of the revenue from customs. Where articles are taxed by our tariff, but made free by the Canadian, or where the difference of duties in Canada and the United States would insure a profit on the adventure, merchandise might be exported in bond from our own warehouses in Canada, to be thrown upon our markets without the payment of any duty whatever to the United States. Merchandise so imported might supply, to a large extent, the consumption of New England and New York, in whose ports so large a portion of the public revenue is now collected.

“At the ports of Pensacola, in Florida, and Shieldsboro’, near the mouth of Pearl river, in Mississippi, on our Gulf coast, revenue officers are stationed, but no duties, to any considerable amount, collected. But for the presence of a revenue force at those points, the valuable products of European and West Indian commerce might be introduced, free of duty, into the interior, through the waters commanded by those ports, with hardly a possibility of prevention, and to the serious diminution of the revenue now collected at the ports of New Orleans and Mobile.

“Other instances of the necessity of a preventive service might be readily suggested, but it is not deemed necessary. It is believed that the expense of maintaining it might, at some points, be reduced without impairing its utility, and the department has that subject now under consideration.”

What ports of that description it is deemed by this department necessary to retain will be seen by reference to the bill reorganizing the collection districts, submitted by me to Congress with my report of January 15, 1859, to which I have repeatedly called the attention of Congress.

The resolution is herewith returned.

I am, very respectfully,

HOWELL COBB,
Secretary of the Treasury.

HON. E. B. WASHBURN,
*Chairman of Committee on Commerce,
House of Representatives.*

Statement showing the custom-houses now established by law, the expenses of which exceeded the amount of their receipts, as appears by the transactions of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1860.

Districts.	Gross revenue.	Expenditures.		
		Revenue cutter service.	Other than revenue cutter service.	Total.
Passamaquoddy, Maine	\$7,290 43	\$8,641 22	\$15,867 68	\$24,508 90
Machias, Maine	511 84		2,661 27	2,661 27
Frenchman's Bay, Maine	779 96		4,715 82	4,715 82
Penobscot, Maine	1,419 82		3,867 29	3,867 29
Waldoborough, Maine	951 88		6,692 70	6,692 70
Wiscasset, Maine	570 53		6,655 54	6,655 54
Saco, Maine	230 93		1,641 33	1,641 33
Kennebunk, Maine	90 62		732 00	732 00
York, Maine	28 80		667 91	667 91
Belfast, Maine	1,236 75		5,524 14	5,524 14
Portsmouth, New Hampshire	5,445 15		5,635 09	5,635 09
Vermont, Vermont	6,772 98		14,777 94	14,777 94
Marblehead, Massachusetts	529 62		2,170 28	2,170 28
Plymouth, Massachusetts	53 68		1,992 17	1,992 17
Barnstable, Massachusetts	2,309 29		12,025 01	12,025 01
Edgartown, Massachusetts	591 45		2,823 93	2,823 93
New London, Connecticut	9,998 51	9,325 98	2,592 90	11,918 88
Stonington, Connecticut	144 81		1,651 79	1,651 79
Sackett's Harbor, New York	74 86		2,700 29	2,700 29
Genesee, New York	2,295 44		5,703 29	5,703 29
Oswego, New York	7,309 01	3,044 09	15,067 16	18,111 25
Niagara, New York	6,344 82		12,356 16	12,356 16
Buffalo Creek, New York	11,119 74		14,773 21	14,773 21
Oswegatchie, New York	3,040 40		6,843 24	6,843 24
Sag Harbor, New York	274 14		677 50	677 50
Champlain, New York	11,362 16		11,433 92	11,433 92
Cape Vincent, New York	2,785 82		6,049 85	6,049 85
Dunkirk, New York	310 32		938 32	938 32
Perth Amboy, New Jersey	1,143 85		4,215 26	4,215 26
Newark, New Jersey	491 50		1,602 93	1,602 93
Presque Isle, Pennsylvania	319 48	4,136 82	994 27	5,131 09
Pittsburg, Pennsylvania	2,484 51		2,887 92	2,887 92
Delaware, Delaware	5,362 80	9,315 66	6,088 29	15,403 95
Annapolis, Maryland	343 72		921 24	921 24
Town Creek, Maryland	87 91		154 67	154 67
Havre-de-Grace, Maryland	151 13		151 16	151 16
Georgetown, District of Columbia	764 85		2,460 23	2,460 23
Tappahannock, Virginia	212 65		1,607 14	1,607 14
Cherrystone, Virginia	415 18		486 99	486 99
Yorktown, Virginia	380 85		530 66	530 66
Yeocomico, Virginia	78 40		150 43	150 43
Ocracoke, North Carolina	79 42		2,170 95	2,170 95
Georgetown, South Carolina	77 43		483 76	483 76
Beaufort, South Carolina	3 89		250 00	250 00
St. Mary's, Georgia	76 17		613 14	613 14
Brunswick, Georgia	86 47		620 81	620 81
St. Augustine, Florida			1,917 50	1,917 50

STATEMENT—Continued.

Districts.	Gross revenue.	Expenditures.		
		Revenue cutter service.	Other than revenue cutter service.	Total.
Key West, Florida.....	\$7,687 32	\$4,357 74	\$6,469 46	\$10,827 20
St. Mark's, Florida.....	161 24	-----	3,994 63	3,994 63
St. John's, Florida.....	798 88	-----	2,303 11	2,303 11
Apalachicola, Florida.....	3,083 07	-----	4,981 26	4,981 26
Bay Port, Florida.....	32 88	-----	350 00	350 00
Pilatka, Florida.....	-----	-----	350 00	350 00
Selma, Florida.....	283 68	-----	355 24	355 24
Tuscumbia, Florida.....	-----	-----	360 50	360 50
Vicksburg, Mississippi.....	-----	-----	250 00	250 00
Teché, Louisiana.....	292 58	-----	1,142 00	1,142 00
Saluria, Texas.....	7,147 26	-----	8,342 36	8,342 36
Brazos de Santiago, Texas.....	15,916 95	-----	18,350 29	18,350 29
Paso del Norte, Texas.....	6,085 75	-----	6,169 60	6,169 60
Knoxville, Tennessee.....	-----	-----	350 00	350 00
Hickman, Tennessee.....	-----	-----	284 62	284 62
Sandusky, Ohio.....	4,532 95	6,839 22	4,109 67	10,948 89
Michilimackinack, Michigan.....	422 22	4,738 41	4,095 93	8,834 34
New Albany, Indiana.....	324 20	-----	468 89	468 89
Jeffersonville, Indiana.....	-----	-----	262 50	262 50
Cairo, Illinois.....	-----	-----	800 25	800 25
Peoria, Illinois.....	307 74	-----	350 00	350 00
Hannibal, Missouri.....	51 30	-----	1,018 00	1,018 00
Minnesota, Minnesota.....	-----	-----	2,071 79	2,071 79
Puget's Sound, Washington Ter.....	4,440 60	15,504 05	8,233 16	23,737 21
Cape Perpetua, Oregon.....	36 50	10,730 43	2,720 00	13,450 43
Port Orford, Oregon.....	24 50	-----	3,024 92	3,024 92
Sonoma, California.....	2,163 93	-----	3,333 94	3,333 94
San Joaquin, California.....	4 80	-----	3,540 00	3,540 00
Sacramento, California.....	113 80	-----	3,200 00	3,200 00
San Diego, California.....	-----	-----	2,472 52	2,472 52
Monterey, California.....	27 50	-----	5,613 75	5,613 75
San Pedro, California.....	-----	-----	4,785 00	4,785 00
	150,376 62	76,633 62	301,698 47	378,332 09

F. BIGGER, *Register*.TREASURY DEPARTMENT, *Register's Office*, April 5, 1860.

